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THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION
BRIEFLY DEFENDED
AGAINST THE
PHILOSOPHERS AND REPUBLICANS
OF
FRANCE.

BY THE
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TO the eminent and experienced political ability, to the commanding and brilliant eloquence, to the comprehensive and mighty mind of Burke, be it left to point out the necessarily ruinous consequences of those principles and systems, which by their wild extravagance, exciting foul revolt and frantic sedition, have rendered France the theatre of such crimes and calamities, as fill with horror and penetrate with compassion the neighbouring nations. To him be it left to expose the madness, which, despising the past, and reckless of the future, overthrows every thing already established, and attempts to change, by legislative authority, man,

manners, and opinions; to reprobate the wickedness which forces its way, through blood and rapine, through widely extended public distress and private misery, to a fancied perfection of the social union; to deride the folly which makes destruction preparatory to establishment, which permits injustice while it promises security, and exhorts to rebellion while it requires order and obedience. To the admired author of "The Reflections on the French Revolution" be it intrusted to elucidate, and to recommend those generous principles of loyalty and honour which actuated, those graceful and decorous manners which adorned, our valorous and gallant forefathers. To him too be given the task of declaring, what Britons experimentally feel and gratefully acknowledge, the wisdom displayed in, the happiness secured by, the British constitution. With what force of truth, with what power of genius, all this has been done by him, the applause of the good and the admiration of all abundantly testify.

If, with abilities far inferior, I presume to undertake a cause of infinitely higher importance, it is not that I am not duly sensible

sible how unequal I am to the work, how unworthy of the glory, of defending the holy Faith of Christ. But to defend such a cause who, of merit merely human, is not unworthy, who, of powers merely human, is not unequal? He, whose lips are purified by the fire of the heavenly altar, is alone worthy to speak; he, whose mind is directed by the influences of the Holy Spirit, is alone worthy to write, of the undoubted truth, of the sublime morality, of the blessed effect of the Christian Religion. God, who out of the mouth of infants perfecteth praise, may give to a weak attempt the power of His might, and may cause even a feeble voice to be to Christians a sound of alarm, exciting them to prize, according to its inestimable value, the religion of their fathers, and to maintain it with firmness and zeal; since it is now, humanly speaking, in imminent peril from the daring impiety and the desperate attempts of the French Philosophers and Republicans, who deny its truth, despise its precepts, and persecute its ministers.

But do the French Republicans, by which term they are designed, who have at length declared

declared France to be a Republic, and who, like the Chaos of the Poet, bear rule in that embroiled empire of anarchy; do the philosophical Republicans of France indeed reject the profession of the Religion of Jesus Christ? Have they indeed presented to the astonished world, what the world hitherto regarded as an impossible event, a monstrous scene of deliberate and authorised national apostacy? Are Frenchmen, once subjects of a King denominated Most Christian, and who were then with reason proud that their Sovereign was so denominated, are they become the persecutors of that religion in which they hoped heretofore for eternal salvation? Do they ridicule those precepts which they venerated heretofore as indispensable rules of holy life? Do they drive from among them those ministers whom they revered heretofore as ambassadors of their gracious Redeemer? Christians! in whom the bright and comfortable beams of that light from Heaven, the sun of righteousness, are not quenched by the gross and palpable darkness of infidelity, whose minds are not perverted by the pert jargon of self-taught, self-conceited

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metaphysicians, hear with indignation, that the philosophy dominant in France, which, like the blind and darkly-working mole, has long been undermining your religion, now openly attempts to confound it, and to place it on the same level, with the impostures and superstitions which at different times have prevailed, or prevail in the several countries of the world: hear, with mingled sorrow and detestation, that the whole spirit and principles of the French Revolution, the means by which it has been effected, and some of the acts of those bodies to which the conduct of it has been intrusted, are repugnant to the doctrines of the New Testament: and that as republicans have destroyed the monarchy, philosophers, practising the lessons which have long been taught, have destroyed the Christian church of France. They yet give indeed to the ministers of religion a pitiful support for the present, merely because the people are not immediately to be weaned from their prejudices; but, so soon as they shall have rendered it sufficiently contemptible in the eyes of the people, and shall have prepared them for such a deed, by one sweeping blow they will

will rid themselves of the incumbrance. They will thus more effectually declare by deeds, what in words they do not scruple to declare, that all religions are in their minds equally true or false, all equally deserving the national protection.

In these several ways they have attacked the Christian religion, and by the help of power, audaciously usurped and tyrannically exerted, have succeeded at this time, to a certain degree, in their impious designs against it. They wish to persuade mankind that all religions, and Christianity among the rest, owe their origin and establishment to the interested craft of priests, and the credulity of the weak multitude: they have acted throughout their revolutionary proceedings in contempt of the commands of the gospel; they have destroyed all public pre-eminence and national profession of the Christian religion.

It is unnecessary that particular and especial proof should be brought, that the charges against the French philosophers, under these several heads, are true and well-founded. For as philosophers, they will glory to plead in the affirmative to the first charge; with respect

respect to the second, the authoritative act of the assemblies, and the atrocities to which the deluded populace has been roused, are but too well known; and to the truth of the third charge, the sacrilegious profanation of religious edifices, the applause given to Atheistical blasphemy, and the undisguised declarations to this effect of the liberal and enlightened in France, bear ample and melancholy testimony. Facts have spoken a plain, and an alarming language to the world: facts, which neither Philosophers nor their approvers would condescend to reconcile, even if it were possible, with an obedience, which they would disdain to practise, to the laws of Christianity.

The defender therefore of the Christian Religion against the Philosophers and Republicans of France will show, that it has a pure source, an heavenly origin, even the Divine benevolence to man; that it has a divine revelation and authority for the support of its credibility; that it entirely differs in the end it proposes, and in its means of attaining that end, from those religions that have been invented or corrupted by man, and is as superior to them all, as the glorious lu-

minary of day to the fetid exhalation of the stagnant pool.

It will be but too easy to prove, that the principle which gave birth to the monstrous French Republic, and the conduct of the French Republicans, has been and is irreconcilable with the precepts which are given in the New Testament to regulate the civil duties of Christians. It will be proved that, when a nation is converted to Christianity, or a nation of Christians is formed, a national predominancy ought to be allowed to the profession of the Christian faith, and that a national support cannot conscientiously be withheld from the ministers of the Gospel.

It would be in vain to expect that they who deny the truth of Christianity, should consider themselves as under any obligation to observe its precepts, or to support a public national profession of it. But to those who do not deny it I address myself, and call upon them to reflect, that if they admit the truth of Christianity, they must not forget that, as being true, it is essentially distinguished from all other religions. They cannot think, what it is too much the mode of

the present day to think, that it is a matter of indifference of what religion any one makes a profession. To them it must be evident, that they who admit the truth of any revealed religion are obliged, at the peril of their salvation, to act, at least to intend to act, conformably to its precepts; and that political duties are but moral duties of greater extent. I require them to bear in mind that a national establishment has ever been regarded as the most effectual means of maintaining, enforcing and recommending the profession of the Christian faith, and that although the zeal of proselytism may be ridiculed by man, negligence and indifference are criminal before God.

The Republicans of France wish to establish it as an axiom, that all religions which claim the belief and require the assent of mankind, on account of their pretensions to a heavenly origin, all factitious religions, as a certain author the Abbé Raynal now highly honoured in France, is pleased to call them, all, except those which all-sufficient human reason frames for itself, are equally false, and imposed by interested cunning on ignorant credulity. Hence they justify dis-

obedience to the commands of the Gospel, and the destruction of the national church. The force however of the evidence, both external and internal, of the truth of Christianity has always, by the wisest and best men of every age, been deemed irrefragable. To produce, arrange, and explain this evidence, to elucidate the sublime doctrines, and recommend the holy precepts of the Gospel, the talents of able and pious men have been frequently exerted. With such success have their labours in this glorious cause been blessed, that it is not requisite to do that again, which has so often been done so satisfactorily. Since, however, it is the constant practice of infidels to produce again and again their own arguments, as they call them, their flippant objections rather, as if they had never been refuted, and since, unhappily, it is necessary frequently to remind Christians themselves of their faith and duty, it may not be altogether useless, briefly to recapitulate the proofs which confirm the truth of the Christian religion, and to review the circumstances by which in its nature, its history, its proposed end, and the consequent reasonableness of its precepts, it is distinguished

guished from all other religions natural, or, as they pretend to be, revealed;

The Almighty Creator of man framed him at first a being, more exalted in his faculties, and more perfect in his moral character than he now is seen to be. He was subjected to one positive command, that by his obedience he might demonstrate a voluntary dependence, an absolute reliance, on God his Creator. Man however listened to the suggestions of an enemy to his happiness; he rebelled; he forfeited his claim to the Divine favour, and incurred those penalties of which he had been forewarned. It has been supposed that the account, given in the third chapter of Genesis, of the fall of man, is intended to convey, under an allegorical form, a relation of some act of disobedience, in the guilt of which the whole human race, in some prior state of existence, was involved. Whether the wisdom of God has thought fit thus imperfectly to reveal an event, which to know accurately might indeed gratify the curious and speculative, but could supply to the penitent and humble no new motives to obedience or helps to salvation, human conjecture, however presumptuous, is incompetent

petent to determine. Certain it is, man may discover in himself evil dispositions, and stains of corruption indelible by any natural effort, which testify his fall from primæval innocence. He may discover, if with sincerity he search his own heart, a reluctance to be dependent upon any being, even the most wise and powerful, for those faculties and advantages which his pride would persuade him are self-derived : he may, it is to be feared, discover that he feels an inclination to live rather according to the present external appearances of things, than according to rules prescribed by a God, whose perfections and attributes he cannot perceive or comprehend, and to whom he therefore madly presumes he may refuse implicit subjection : and he must be sensible of a desire to gratify those sensual appetites, which are inconsistent, in their ungoverned excess, with the purity of a being designed for a more exalted and refined state of existence.

Such unholy propensities, which are pointed out in the relation of his fall, constitute the moral turpitude of man's natural character. God therefore cannot, consistently with the divine attribute of justice, regard him

him favourably. To extend mercy to him on his own account would be capricious and inconsequent. Mortal means of atonement there remained none. Man was lost irretrievably. It was determined, therefore, in the eternal wisdom of the divine counsels, which it would argue presumption in mortals to scan, that a Being, whose infinitely exalted nature might make such an abasement the more astonishing, and demonstrate to all ranks and orders of created virtues the heinousness of sin, which required such a sacrifice, should take upon him the human nature, and after a life, the holy exemplar of those duties which man is to perform, and of those tempers which he is to cherish, should submit to death; that by such a sacrifice and atonement he might deliver mankind from the wrath due to their natural corruption and their actual faults. This dispensation was not, however, hastily or immaturity to be accomplished. He, who exists not in time, but in eternity, decreed that four thousand years should pass in a splendid and awful preparation for this stupendous instance of the Divine love.

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First, the wickedness of man rendered it necessary for God to destroy, a few only excepted, the whole species. The earth, their habitation, which still bears many visible marks of God's terrible judgement by the flood of waters, was thus rendered a less commodious abode for that proud and pampered creature, on whose mind the terrors or the mercies of God made no impression. Then, withdrawing his eyes from the greater part of mankind, thus the language of the holy scripture is accommodated to the infirmity of our conceptions, the Almighty was pleased to choose to himself a peculiar people. To the universal Father is not rashly to be imputed an unjust preference or partiality. He chose them as instruments in his hands, that to their anxious care he might entrust his faithful promises, that they might sustain the continual expectation of the Messiah's coming, and that, by fully repeated sacrifices, by various significant rites and ceremonies, and even by several circumstances of their history, they might prefigure the one great atonement of the death of Christ, the eventful history of his

his church, and the spiritual graces of his kingdom.

This nation, the expectants of his promised mercies, He makes the witnesses of his glorious power. Delivering them with a mighty hand, He "bears them on eagles' wings" from the cruel bondage of their oppressors. He divides the waters of the sea, that they may pass safely through the mighty deep. The pillar of the cloud guides them by day; the pillar of fire gives light to them by night. He feeds them in the desert with the food of Angels, and a stream from the rock of stone quenches their thirst. He delivers, "amid thunders and lightnings and voices," his holy law, at a future period to be spiritually fulfilled by the true Israelites, on the sound of the "still, small voice" of the gospel, the voice of meekness, mercy, and peace. Thus dispensing with the laws, and controuling the powers, of nature in their favour, at length he establishes them in the promised Canaan, the type of the peace and rest of that blessed country, to which the pilgrims through the desert of this world still aspire.

The evidence of these miracles is not easily to be controverted, since they are, in their nature, such that they could not be counterfeited ; such that no one, at the time, could be convinced that they were performed, by any proof short of ocular demonstration. The legislator of the Hebrews neither had, nor claimed to have, any human right to authority over them ; nor did his family, in after times, retain any influence. Yet did the Hebrews allow him, not only to establish for ages their laws of ecclesiastical and civil polity, but even to regulate in the circumstantial details of domestic œconomy and the minute concerns of private life. They submitted, at his bidding, to the obligation of many and burthenfome rites, to the continual repetition of expensive sacrifices, and to the liberal maintenance of a priesthood, useless except for the purpose of those rites and sacrifices. That an individual would have been allowed to exercise all this power over a people, unless they were convinced of his veracity, and saw good reason to admit his divine legation, cannot be believed by any, except by those who are resolved to believe

any thing rather than the word of God. This nation still subsists. Dispersed through the world, they bear with them those lively oracles, for the attestation of which they were raised up at the first, and are the unsuspected witnesses of those truths, which, in their spiritual import, they deny.

In the interval between the establishment of the law and the coming of the Messiah, it was the great duty of the Hebrews, by the due observance of its figurative rites, to cherish within them the blessed hope of his coming. Many prophets and inspired men were sent by God to recal them to their duty, and to "prepare the way of the Lord." They prophesied also in terms obscure at first, but gradually clearer, of the time and manner of his coming, of the nature of his mission, and of the wonderful effects it should produce both in the visible and invisible world. At length, in the fullness of time, the Word, the Son of God, so is the divine author of our redemption called, co-eternal and co-equal with the Father and Holy Spirit, according to the awful and incomprehensible mystery re-

vealed concerning the existence of the ever-adored Trinity, is born, by an ineffable generation, of a pure virgin. Rejecting human splendor, as inconsistent with his purpose, he is born in a state, to mortal eyes mean and contemptible. Yet the multitude of the heavenly host sings the natal hymn of the babe at Bethlehem : thither the Magi of the east are guided by a supernatural light ; and there the child Jesus is preserved by divine solicitude from the insidious cruelty of a jealous tyrant.

His youth passed in obscurity, on entering upon the blessed work of his mission, the Saviour of the world is made known by the declarations of his precursor, and by the glorious voice from heaven, " This is my " beloved Son." The exalted doctrines that he taught, the holy precepts that he delivered, the piety, meekness, self-denial, and patience that he exemplified, can worthily be told only by that beautiful simplicity of the evangelical writers, which, disdaining to seek to ornament a subject too grand for human amplification, is at once correct, pure, energetic, animated, sublime.

Thus

Thus passed the Redeemer's life. At length the Lamb of God bled upon the altar of the cross; reconciled, by that all-powerful propitiation, earth to heaven, and by his precious death purchased for man the means of grace, and the hope of glory. The body in which he endured humiliation, after a triumphant victory over death, was received up into heaven, and clothed with eternal light, that those who at his second coming to judgement shall be found acceptable, may be exalted to the same place, whither their Saviour Christ is gone before.

Such is the catholic faith. Such are the truths, the doctrines and precepts delivered to the world by apostles and martyrs, who joyfully met death in all his terrors, to demonstrate that they hoped for no other reward, than that which the gospel they taught secured to them.

The splendid success which the gospel met with, is, under the circumstances of its promulgation, not to be accounted for, without supposing the assistance of power more than human. Men every where received with joy the glad tidings; in the course of a few
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centuries, the once despised cross was elevated above the ensigns of supreme authority, and the kingdoms of this world became the kingdoms of God and of his Christ.

The providence of God, for the sins of the Christian world, at this time permits a large and fair portion of his church to be persecuted and insulted by vain philosophizing sophists. They, however, it is to be feared, find their chief objection to the Christian faith, in the necessity which it imposes of pure and godly living, in the humility, meekness and charity which it requires, in the poverty of spirit and renunciation of worldly tempers which it demands, and even in the refined nature of the reward that it proposes. Obedience to the commands of the gospel is, nevertheless, a reasonable service. It is reasonable, that he who is redeemed from this present world, should by every method detach and wean his affections from it, and set them on things above. He must therefore practise those virtues, peculiar to Christianity, which produce that blessed effect. It is just that he, who is called to the hope of a life in heaven should cherish that hope,

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and form within him a heavenly temper and frame of mind. He whose salvation is uncertain, and who owes that salvation solely to the mercy of God, should, consistently with such a sense of frailty and demerit, walk humbly with God, and meekly with man. If God so loved the world as to redeem it by the blood of his Son, from thence we are become worthy objects of the love of each other.

The duties which the gospel enjoins are not then unmeaning, nor merely positive duties, but have a strict relation to the cause of the incarnation of the Son of God, a near affinity to the effect to be produced by it.

They, whose minds are unsophisticated, and who yet can form a candid judgement, will not fail to discover in Christianity those characteristics which distinguish a true from a false religion. Let such men reflect, that during the first ages of the church, the profession of the Christian faith presented no allurements of fame, ease, or honour, but, on the contrary, exposed to contempt, peril, and persecution; that the facts al-

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ledged in evangelical history were never denied even by those who refused to allow its divine authority : that, in every age, even from the dissensions of Christians among themselves, may be drawn an invincible argument in favour of the truth of those gospels, to which they all assented, while they disagreed in almost all other particulars : they will then discover in what points Christianity differs from that natural religion, which the pertness and petulance of this age so much encourages ; from that atheism, which cannot, from that deism, which does not, pretend to a revelation.

Let them reflect, that Christianity was not propagated by the sword of mighty conquerors, but by the preaching of twelve poor and illiterate men, by the force of miracles attesting the divine co-operation, and by the persuasive influence of the lives of its first professors : that, neither by those things which it permits in this world, nor by those which it promises in the world to come, does it pamper the sensuality, gratify the pride, or inflame the ambition, of man : they will then discover in what it differs from that religion which philosophy values
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next to itself, the religion of the sensual, the imperious, the bloody impostor of Arabia.

Let them reflect, that the times of its promulgation, in the several gradations of revelation, by promise, by type, by prophecy, by accomplishment, are exactly determined; that it bore at the first, and still is able to bear, the test of severe and enlightened inquiry; that it includes neither absurdity nor contradiction; that its morality is pure and benevolent, and such that the wisest and best of men of all ages have acquiesced in it, as leading man to the highest degree of personal and social perfection: they will then discern by what marks it is distinguished from the unauthorized tales, the gross and stupid absurdities, the distorted institutions, both religious and political, of Paganism, and of all other superstitions by which, in India, China, and America, human reason is disgraced, and the social order disturbed.

Zeal, for, blessed be God, I have learned that it is good to be zealously affected in a good cause, may perhaps have induced me to enlarge too much on this glorious subject. May what has here been said be sufficient to recall to the minds of Christians

the more important proofs and peculiar excellencies of our religion ; and to expose the pitiful misapprehensions and futile subterfuges by which modern philosophers attempt to disguise ignorance, and pretend to justify impiety.

It is now to be considered, in what respects the French nation, in the course of the late revolution, has violated the rules, which, as Christian, it ought to have held sacred. Here, unhappily, a wide field is open before me : over this extent I mean not however accurately to trace the several steps of the republicans, but to review rather their principles, against which alone argument can be brought, than their actions, which power alone can restrain or punish.

The grand right which the revolutionists wish to establish, is the right of rebellion : unless this be established consistently with Christian principles, their proceedings are clearly irreconcilable with Christian duty. The Right of Rebellion is, in fact, if government have any right at all, the right they claim. They call it indeed by several popular names, and disguise or conceal those features, which, in their full deformity, would

would shock and disgust mankind. The people are told, very plausibly, that they are the only just, true, and legal sovereign ; that is, the same persons are both supreme and subject ; every man is his own king, and all governments, except that of a mob, are usurpations. It is argued, that the people, whensoever it shall be their sovereign will and pleasure, may overturn any government, for if they did not frame it, it is usurpation ; if they did frame it, they surely may dispose at will of the work of their own hands. Nay, this right of rebellion is not only a right, but a duty ; and not only a duty, but the most sacred of all duties. " Insurrection," says a pompous and once applauded orator, though, according to his plan, the meaning of the word is rather obscure, since, if the people be sovereign, against whom are they to rise ?—" Insurrection is the most sacred duty of man ;" and the National Convention very lately has authoritatively re-echoed the sentiment. If this sublime rant did not lead to disorder, vice, and misery, it might be treated with contempt, as rank and ridiculous nonsense. But since, when men forget that they are

Christians, they are soon persuaded to exercise the right of rebellion, it is necessary to subject this right to a sober disquisition on Christian principles, that although philosophers are led astray by their own lights, Christians may be retained in the path of duty.

This right then is said to be derived from the natural equality, and the imprescriptible rights, of man. This dark cloud of unsubstantial metaphysics would not have overshadowed France, had not the people perversely refused to be guided by the light which the gospel affords. They, who profess the Christian religion, are either already the subjects of some government, or they are in a state, which has been imagined, but which perhaps never existed except in imagination, about to frame a government for themselves, and rightfully possessed of the power of doing so. In the first case, the express words of scripture oblige them conscientiously to submit to the powers which assert and exercise authority over them. These powers, the scripture tells them, do not, either actually or virtually, proceed from the people, but are ordained of God.

No whimsical theories can justify them in disturbing the order of a good and even tolerable government. Even if it be their lot to live under a bad government, they are to consider the evils brought upon them by it, as ordained by the good providence of God for a wholesome trial of their patient endurance. They are to reflect, that a submissive conformity to the Divine will may change temporal evils into spiritual blessings. They are therefore to suffer them, as they are to suffer the physical and moral evils, which abound, perhaps predominate, in the world. They are to remember that the light afflictions of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed. If oppressed or unjustly treated in their civil capacity, they are not to return evil for evil; if persecuted for their adherence to their faith, they are to rejoice and be exceeding glad. Such is the language of the divine writings; such was the practice of the primitive professors of our holy faith under Roman and Grecian, under Pagan and Christian emperors.

If, according to the second hypothesis, it should ever happen that Christians, fairly re-

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leased from every tie which bound them to the government, which they, till that time, had obeyed, or, having never before been united in civil society, should have to frame a government for themselves, it is their duty, after having established their civil polity, on such principles and for such purposes as are not inconsistent with Christian morality, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, to fear God, and to honour, whatever shape they may have given it, the supreme authority. They are not to consider themselves as at liberty to violate, whenever they shall please, the solemn compact of obedience for protection, which is always implied, and is not the less binding, certainly because, as it is supposed in this case, it has received the express and personal assent of both parties. They are not at liberty, in any case, at any time, under whatever form of government, to sport, according to the dictates of an unbridled will, with the happiness of thousands, always endangered, often destroyed, by the mischievous licentiousness of a revolution. They are ever bound to respect the safety, the property, and, what are often dearer than safety and property,

perty, the appropriate rights, the honourable privileges, the ennobling distinctions, of all the members of the social union. Such a line of conduct even common honesty of principle would direct all men to pursue; such will ever be followed assuredly by those, who in their civil capacity act under the influence of that Christian spirit of meekness, peace, and charity, which cannot consist with violence, disorder, and dissension.

Is tyranny, then, it will be asked, to oppress at will? Is the cruelty and injustice of despots, a name lately given to princes without exception, even to those who exercise with mildness their legal power, the only cruelty and injustice which Christianity allows? When the governor can no longer be considered as the minister of God for good, is he still to be obeyed as the minister of God? These questions are insidious and cavilling; they seem to be proposed by men, who desire to know how soon they may allowably begin to create confusion. They purpose to bring into disrepute the Christian duty of obedience to the magistrate, by showing its difficulty, although the diffi-

difficulty of performing any duty cannot make the performance of it less indispensable. It may, however, be answered, without retracting what has been said respecting the duty of those Christians, who unfortunately are subject to real and unqualified despotism, that there is perhaps no government, now in the Christian world, in which the people have not some constitutional rights ; or in which the sovereign is not, by some actual oath, or by some condition, expressed or implied, by some fundamental laws, by customs long established, and even by the improved manners of the age, restrained within certain limits in the exercise or abuse of his power. It may, perhaps, be granted, that under forms of government not absolutely despotic, when the purposes for which the government is established, are defeated by the notorious abuse of it ; when, instead of affording protection from injustice and wrongs, itself inflicts them ; when it violates the laws which it should enforce, the *ratio ultima*, not of kings only, but also of the people, must decide the cause. The necessity of the case perhaps may excuse the extreme measure. Republics, however, are,
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of all governments, the last that allow of such an appeal. Monarchs have sometimes given to their subjects the sword inscribed, *Prome. Si merear, in me.* Republics are not so generous. They are not influenced by a sense of shame. They are not restrained by a fear of punishment. Religion alone can temper their ferocity; and religion the unhappy republic of France has declared to be a thing indifferent and valueless. The evil, however, of a bad government, or the abuse of a good one, must not be imagined merely, but felt; it must be proved, not by argument, but by suffering; the grievance must be long endured; all other resources and means of remedy must be exhausted, and all hope of other relief be cut off, ere forcible resistance can be excusable. Ideal theories of a metaphysical perfection of government can no more justify recourse to violence, or a refusal of a reasonably good government when offered, than can the visionary illusions of the fanatic, or the perturbed ravings of the madman. A revolution must not even be thought of, till a dreadful, a dire necessity demands it. It should never be remembered afterward with

triumph or exultation ; for even though the consequences be happy and prosperous, that a revolution was necessary, was at the time, an evil. Such commemoration, which, though it sometimes proceeds from error, yet sometimes looks forward to mischief, tends to efface all sense of the beauty and excellence of order, and encourages a turbulent effervescence of discontent, which is prejudicial to the common interest, and is inconsistent with the peaceful spirit of a beneficent religion.

If the lately-discovered natural equality be considered in another point of view, it will be found that the rights of man, arising from it, loosen every bond of domestic relation, and are incompatible with every Christian precept given to regulate domestic duty. This unnatural natural equality must be builded on the ruins of the rights of fathers, masters, and husbands. For why needs any one to obey an equal ? The precept, " Children obey your parents in the Lord," must be disregarded, when the child, in virtue of his citizenship, is the equal of his parent, and has rights, which are constantly and necessarily in contradiction to the principle

ciple of filial obedience, and may eventually come into competition with the performance of the duty. The precept, "Servants obey your masters," will probably not be much attended to in a state, which, by its constitutional declaration, authorises the servant to pay only so much obedience to the master as he shall find convenient, or specifically agree for. Masters will in general find it very much to contribute to their domestic peace and prosperity, that their servants, recurring to a book which they were taught to reverence as a rule of life, should find themselves, by that authority, commanded to obey their masters, "not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

The holy law of the Christian legislator respecting marriage has been formally abrogated by the Republicans of France. It is ordained by Jesus Christ, that the wife shall not be divorced, except for the crime of adultery; of which crime he also shall be guilty, who shall marry her that is put away. The enlightened legislators of the French Republic have declared marriage to be merely

a civil contract, dissolvable at the pleasure of the contracting parties. This their decree surely needs no comment. It is needless to prove that, when human laws are made in contradiction to, and in contempt of, the law of God, the legislators stand convicted of daring and shameless impiety.

Thus are we obliged to fight *pro aris et focis* against the metaphysical republicans. For, if the tender sentiments, which adorn the character, and constitute the happiness, of man in domestic life, do not overpower the sullen and unfeeling theories upon which cold-hearted philosophers now wish to form his political character, even his domestic happiness will be destroyed. All the endearing charities, which, originating in nature, are approved by reason and sanctioned by religion, will be dissolved; and a loss will be sustained, which even a true, a secure and generous liberty could not compensate or repair.

Humanity shrinks from a recapitulation of frauds and perjuries, massacres and assassinations, in the perpetration of which, the authority of Christian precepts has been set at nought. The exercise of the Right of Rebellion,

bellion, in the hands of modern philosophers, renders these unavoidable. By these crimes the character of human nature has been deeply injured; for they have been committed with a cool and savage exultation in human misery, with an air of unfeeling triumph, with an outrageous rejection of even a decent pretext of justice or compassion, of all which, till now, human nature was deemed incapable. The veil which concealed the excess of her moral deformity has been rudely torn away: it has been shewn what a horrid and savage animal man is, when, dead to shame and honour, he has lost also the religious sense; is unrestrained by the fear of God, unawed by the terrors of eternity. These crimes have reached their utmost height. The sacred Majesty of an anointed King, a good, a just man, a mild, a benevolent father of his people, has been sacrilegiously dragged to the scaffold; he has been there with most barbarous indignity murdered; and to his mangled body, with wanton insult, have been denied the rites, the awful and revered rites of Christian burial.

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The conduct of the French Republicans in pillaging and destroying the Church established in France, remains the last subject of discussion. The injustice of such a proceeding, and the loss which France has suffered by it in a moral and political view, has already been treated of by others with energy and sensibility. Consistently with the design of this work, it is requisite to shew, that they have acted in a manner injurious to the Church of Christ, and destructive of its true interests, and that their conduct therefore calls for the reprobation, and deserves the abhorrence of the Christian world. Vain would be the attempt to excite in them any compunction for the wrongs they have committed; but there is hope that other nations may be preserved from the contagion of such an example. The Philosophers of France contend, that it is not a duty incumbent upon a nation, in its corporate capacity, to profess any religion at all. That a state may allowably subsist indifferent to all religion, not acknowledging any particular faith or form of worship, not recognising, as its protector, preserver, or benefactor, any heavenly

ly author of mankind, is an opinion that cannot be generally admitted, till man shall have lost all moral sentiment, and the social union shall become as lawless a combination of ferocious animals as the herd of mountain wolves.

Let us hear the voice of nature and reason, whom even philosophers are not unwilling, since they are but abstract ideas to acknowledge as Divinities ; but seeking them with overweening confidence in themselves, they mistake for those fair forms, passion and pride. Nature and Reason, who guide to Christianity the penitent and humble, those who lament the frailty of the former and are duly sensible of the fallibility of the latter, nature and reason proclaim that every individual rational creature of the Lord and Father of the Universe is bound to maintain and to profess a humble and sincere allegiance to his Creator and Sovereign, to express gratitude to him for his benefits, and to receive with submissive reverence his divine revelations. If those revelations point out the means of eternal happiness in a future state, man is bound to embrace those means with joyful obedience.

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That aggregate of individuals, which composes a nation, is bound also to manifest its allegiance to God by the same expressions of fear and love. But it is in duty bound, because it is able, to do more. Its duties are increased in proportion to its powers. As every individual is bound to serve God with all his might, with all the faculties of his soul and body; so is the nation also bound to serve him with its collected strength, with its united force. Much has God left to be performed by human means on earth, for the service and interests of his kingdom in Heaven. Much spiritual benefit has the Divine wisdom permitted to be dispensed by man to man. In the ordinary course of Providence, men, singly or united, convey to their fellow-creatures those blessings, of which, though they could neither directly give them, nor of themselves withhold them, they are, by the Author of those blessings, made the intermediate distributors. They who, whether singly or united, have the means of conferring good, shall give an awful account of the use made by them of the powers with which they are entrusted.

The nation then, it may be inferred, is not only in conscience bound to endeavour to secure the temporal peace and prosperity of all who compose it, but also to provide, as far as it can provide, for their eternal happiness. It may justly dread to be rejected by the Almighty God, in its corporate capacity, if it neglect this duty; since no other object, for the attainment of which men are supposed to unite in civil society, can so deservedly claim their attention, or ought even to be brought into competition with it. It can never be thought that it is the duty of the state to exert all its power to produce temporal benefit, but that it may allowably neglect the means which it has of producing eternal good. Such an opinion can never be entertained, except by Atheistical philosophers, to whom the concerns of eternity are of no importance. Such an opinion would not for a moment be endured, except in an age which wealth and pleasure, and general levity of mind, have rendered regardless of eternal salvation.

The state then, if it be at all anxious to commend its national concerns to the divine

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protection, is obliged to choose, among the religions which present themselves, that one which it may think most worthy of its election. It may not be indifferent in this choice ; for it is a matter of high concern ; since, though men, individually or united in society, may possibly, by the mercy of God, be saved in different religions, they can be saved only in that which they sincerely believe to be true. To this religion which the state shall choose, a predominancy must be given ; a public preference combined with due toleration of other religions. It must be revered by the power, it must be sanctioned by the laws, it must be taught by the authority of the state. It must be recommended by the persuasive example of the wise and good ; it must be adorned by the munificence of the rich ; and sustained by the zeal and affection of all.

The provision for the teachers of this religion must not be precarious, lest religion itself be forced to rely, for support, upon the caprice or passion of the multitude ; lest the pearl of great price be trodden under the feet of those who are at all times but too insensible
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of its value, and who will ever wish to discover that to be unnecessary, which they experience to be burthensome or expensive. This provision must be independent, that there may be no temptation for those who teach or administer in this religion, to corrupt its truths, dispense with its holy rites, or to omit its decent ceremonies, that they may please their congregations : for men in general, it is to be feared, are inclined rather to approve of those ministers who make religion, both in faith and practice, what they are pleased to denominate simple and easy, than of those who preach that religion which, as the true religion does, confounds their pride and controuls their passions. This provision should also be liberal, that the teachers may receive the willing respect of the poor, to whose condition of life their's ought to be superior ; and not be injured by the fastidious contempt of the rich, to whose condition their's ought to be equal. Thus will the Christian state, for I certainly mean not to speak of any other, acquit itself of its first and most important duty, which is to instruct and educate the people under its care, whom it

ought to consider as its children, in such a manner that they may become, when the time of their transitory abode on earth shall be completed, fit members of the glorious society of heaven ; fit subjects of the great King of the universal and eternal kingdom. Thus may Christians too acquit themselves of their first and most important duty, that of believing with the heart, and confessing with the mouth unto salvation. Thus will the visible Church of Christ subsist on earth in peace and charity, nourished by the sacraments, comforted by the word, and united in the worship of God.

Whether He who ruleth in the kingdoms of the world, will punish other nations by that scourge with which, for more than four years, France has been afflicted ; whether He will permit the church and monarchy of France to be finally abolished, and the example of France to have the immediate or remote effect of exciting to revolt the subjects of other governments ; these things are yet involved in the doubt and darkness of futurity. But mortals, though prescience be wisely denied to them, may conjecture

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and reflect, may reason on the past, and discover probable and wholesome means of prevention for the future.

The French republic proposes itself, both by force and fraud, to the imitation of mankind. Under the specious pretext of combating superstition, tyranny and prejudice, it wars, with implacable enmity, against the Christian religion; and threatens the entire overthrow of all the systems upon which, at present, rest the order and happiness of civil society. But the principles of the French are more to be dreaded than their arms: for with sorrow it must be confessed, that the minds of Christians in general are but little occupied by the truths which their holy faith teaches, but little impressed with a sense of those duties which it imposes. Far from thinking it necessary for them as Christians to banish entirely from their thoughts the philosophy of France, they seem to think, that they may allowably indulge in licentious speculations, and be as unsettled with respect to political opinions as folly or fancy may incline them to be. They consider questions relating to obedience to the government,

vernment, or the maintenance of an established church, as questions merely of political expediency, and are not aware that in these points their Christian duty is intimately concerned. They are not therefore sufficiently prepared against the infusion of noxious principles. They have not a fixed sense of what is right, at all times ready to exclude and repel what is wrong. The most probable method then of ensuring success in the conflict with impiety and anarchy, is to endeavour, by every method, to influence the minds of the people by the truths of Christianity ; to renew the impression of those truths where it is obliterated ; and to convince Christians that their religion condemns, both in general principle and practical detail, the French Revolution. A great and powerful enemy to Christianity has arisen in the very heart of Christendom ; but sophistry and delusion are the nerves of its strength : sophistry, by which it persuades to infidelity ; delusion, by which it excites to rebellion. Let Christians then be true to themselves, and without forsaking charity, let them no longer be guilty of lukewarm indifference

difference or affected liberality in matters of high importance to their peace and happiness in this world, and upon which depend also interests of infinite concern. A sincere conviction of the truth of the Christian Religion will be the firm support of social order; a sincere practice of its duties will draw down the blessing of God.

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of the world, and upon which the
interests of mankind center. A
man of the world, the Christian
man, will be the man of the world
in the eyes of the world, and will
show the blessing of God.

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